

A Clear
APOLOGY
AND
Just Defence
OF
Richard Stafford
For Himself;



With a Rehearsal, and further Explanation of
what he hath done concerning National
Affairs. *by Richard Stafford.*

But truly, I am full of Power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of Judgment, and of Might, to declare unto Jacob his Transgression, and to Israel his Sin. Hear this, I pray you, ye Heads of the House of Jacob, and Princes of the House of Israel, that abhor Judgment, and pervert all Equity: They build up Zion with Blood, and Jerusalem with Iniquity: The Heads thereof judge for Reward, and the Priests thereof teach for Hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for Money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us, Micah 3. 8, 9, 10, 11.

But Judgment shall return unto Righteousness, and all the Upright in heart shall follow it, Psal. 94. 15.

All the Words of my Mouth are in Righteousness, there is nothing forward or perverse in them: They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find Knowledge, Prov. 8. 8, 9.

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TO THE READER.

A Preface may seem unusual and impertinent before an Apology; But it is necessary to advertise the Reader somewhat before, lest, when he comes to see such serious Truth applied so exceeding close and forceably, He be frightened quite away, that he cannot endure to see what here is Published. And there will arise a secret Prejudice why I should not seek out smooth Things and Soft Words as do others; but the Land is not able to bear all these Words. Why then doth the Land act and commit such Things, which are here spoken of with more Peace and Gentleness than they are done? Indeed I am naturally averse from tormenting the Minds of Men; and also I do understand what becomes Education, Civility and Custom of the world, as do others. But it being my Duty and Business (according to the Grace and Knowledge intrusted with me) to endeavour to turn People from Iniquity unto Righteousness, I ought (or otherwise I am not faithful in my Office) to use the most cogent Arguments, and to press them with the utmost force and power which I can. The Words of the Wise are like Nails fastened by the Master of Assemblies; so whoever doth not drive the Nail of Exhortation home to the very head, and fasten it as much as he can on every side, He doth the Work of the Lord deceitfully.

It is gross Ignorance and foolish Imagination to be frightened at Words; for they do express Things which have been, or are now transacting and passing on, or shall be hereafter; and these (not the bare Picture and visible Representation of them) we should indeed fear and endeavour to avoid. We think it better and more safe to read of a picht Battel, a bloody Sea-fight, a consuming Fire, Plague, or such like, than to be in the midst thereof; yea, We would willingly know thereof, and be shewed the way how we may keep out, escape and prevent such evil things: So likewise, everyone doth desire to hear and know of Good Things, and how themselves may obtain and partake thereof. It is the same, yea, more Danger and Loss to be willingly Ignorant of what is contained in the Word of God. For as sure as things were first made, are now upheld, have their beginning and end, increase and decrease, and every Thing is according to its Na-

To the Reader.

ture and Kind, and moves and goes on, as we now see with our bodily Eyes, we look upon, and our Hands handle, and we conceive in our minds; so the same Word will be to every little fulfilled, as we are warned and foretold of. But the Heavens and the Earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of Ungodly Men, 2 Pet. 3. 7. It is the worst sort of Ungodliness, not to like to receive God into their knowledge. It is Rebellion which is as the Sin of Witchcraft, and Stubbornness which is as Iniquity and Idolatry to reject the Word of the Lord, 1 Sam. 15. 23. as was said to Saul the King; for even the Kings and Judges of the Earth do commit Rebellion against God.

We will here assert the Government of God over all Nations and Rulers, come what will of it to my weak and frail Person; as themselves must acknowledge, & cannot gain-say the same. Nor yet do they well to be angry with one who is a Worm, and no man; a Reproach of men, and despised of the People: for as they are Reasonable Creatures, Themselves would not have destruction come upon them at unawares; and notwithstanding the secret excuse they have now, every man in the deep of his Heart, yet then they will think it hard (but just) to be condemned for what they know not, but might have known if they would. If they will Still Despise, and Wonder and Perish, it is to themselves. If they think such a one is mad, only because he would prevent their own Misery, then indeed their Eyes are darkened that they see not. It happens here according to Christ's Method and Prediction, that they which see not, might see; and they which see, might be made Blind, John 9. 39. Poor and Ignorant People do discern the Truth, when it is hid from the Wise and Prudent whom it most concerns. In the latter dayes they shall consider it perfectly, When for Despising will be Anguish and sad Reflection; for Stubbornness, Pain and Misery.

Whatever kind of reception these Words shall meet with in the world, The best Apology for them is their own Truth and Signification.

A Clear APOLOGY and Just Defence of Richard Stafford for himself, &c.

THe Word *Apology* in common apprehension, seems to presuppose fault or inferiority; and doth often come by way of Excuse, mitigation or begging Pardon. Whereas the Compiler of these following Lines, is not conscious to himself of any Crime or Offence he hath done to his own Nation. And also as he stands in the rank of Creatures, he will not acknowledge so much of the other, as the *Pride of Man*, and *Arrogancy of Tongue* would imagine and speak forth.

But to get out from the Perplexity and Labyrinth of Words and Persons, come we to Things; and we would no otherwise consider the several Thoughts, Words and Actions of mankind, but with relation to them. Indeed we cannot know as God knows; for that we may take the more notice of it, it is thrice asserted and repeated, *The Lord looketh from Heaven; He beboldeth all the Sons of Men, from the place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth, He fashioneth their Hearts alike; He considereth all their Works* Psal. 33. 13, 14, 15: whether Good or Evil, to Reward or Punish: *And give to every Man according to his Ways, whose Heart thou knowest for thou even thou only knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men*, 1 Kings 8. 39. This is the alone Prerogative of God; for He knoweth all things, and searcheth the Heart; that not the least Thing can be hid or concealed from him. Whereas we only perceive a little according to the exact Truth; but much more in a false and imperfect manner by doubtful Report and mistaken Observation. And then we cannot thoroughly apprehend a thing wherein many are concerned; so we can give no perfect Judgment and Determination.

God hath taken the like method for the exercise and administration of his Kingdom and Dominion over Men; as our Kings and Governours over their several Countries. And he hath a Book for his Government over all the Nations and Families of the Earth (high and low, rich and poor together) as our Statute and Common Law is for England; and their civil, canon or municipal Laws for other Nations. His Word is given unto Mankind to be a Rule for their Actions, and a Law for them to live and be governed by: and from that we are allowed and commanded to Reprove all manner of Sin and Transgression; as any one now doth take notice or speak of what is done contrary to the Government and Laws of this Nation; which is esteemed no fault, but rather commendable, and a Duty. The same is and ought much more to be in things pertaining to God; and so likewise would be, if there was amongst us the like Zeal for and Knowledge of him that is invisible, who fills Heaven and Earth with his Presence; as now there is regard for the Son of Man, whom we see to be little, and to fall in a Leaf.

But this is to be understood for the Fear and Instruction of some, and for the Comfort of others; That God is not confined to the Imaginations and Sayings of Men: If some speak smooth things and prophetic Decrees; and others too hard Speeches and mistaken Applications; The Judge himself will not ratifie what they say, but con-

Lev. 19. 17.

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demons whom man absolves, as again acquit whom man condemns. *For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth: He shall judge the World with Righteousness, and the People with his Truth, Psal. 96. 13. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things, which were written in the Books according to their Works, Rev. 20. 12.* This, according to the Decree of the Eternal and unchangeable God, is as certain and True, as if it were already past and fulfilled. As Judges and Justices of *God's* delivery do try Prisoners by the statute Book of this Realm at *those* *Officers* which are holden twice a year, so at this general *Grave-diggers* which is to be kept once for all. The dead Bodies of all People, of every Place and Generation since Man was Created on the Earth, shall arise, and we shall all be judged by Christ and his Saints according to those Words written in the Bible: And this according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the same Words.

Behold in this they are not just, I will answer all mine Accusers and Enemies that God is greater than Man; and so much do his Laws exceed theirs. Wherefore do I mention that God is greater than Man? In comparison of him the Nations are as a drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Balance. It is He that sitteth up, by the circle of the Earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers. We shall find and know that He bringeth the Princes to nothing: He maketh the Judges of the Earth as Vanity. Notwithstanding the People have more regard to them because they are seen and their utmost Power is known; then they have to Almighty God, who is not seen, and whose Punishment is threatened. But though God is not seen, yet his Works are. And how Great must He be who built this vast House of the World, and created all things therein? What is the Wrath of a Worm of five or six foot long, to the Displeasure of Him, who hath Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his Footstool? What is a single Individual or an Assembly of Men, who dwell in Houses of Clay that they should (when met in Council) as yet exalt themselves to do according to their own will, notwithstanding Gods Commandment to the contrary? If not to speak out, (because they profess that they know God, but in Works deny him) yet to think and act *Marvellous things against the God of Gods, Dan. 11. 36.* And in this they are worse then him here spoken of, or Pharaoh, for he knew not who was the Lord that he should obey him. What is abomination of Heart, they imagine to be bravery of mind; that they can, and are for doing things otherwise, and as it were hinder that his will be not done here on Earth. Which argues the exceedingfulness of sin, with the infinite guilt and demerit thereof, and it shall be punished with proportionable Condemnation & Misery. *They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: They speak falsely: They set their Mouth against the Heavens; Their Tongue walketh through the Earth, therefore his People return hither and thither, of a full Cup are wrung out to them. Psal. 73. 8, 9, 10.* By the height and breadth and depth of such kind of Transgression, we may judge of the length of future Torments. Whose Thoughts were thus *Luk. 10. 15. exalted to Heaven, their Souls shall be thrust down to Hell.* Shall not God search this out? for He knoweth the secrets of the Heart, the innermost Thoughts and most hidden Imaginations. Even now he looks down from the Habitation of his Holiness, and is not far from every one of us; for at this very moment, He both sees and hears all that we are talking of or doing in our Houses and several places of abode. And so He hath done all along of this Generation of Men now living, as He did of those before we were born. We read of Him in his Word, *for the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a Mighty and a Terrible, which regardeth not*

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Psalm 139 *Thou art* *Deity* *Job 7* *We have a sense and awe and dread of Him upon our minds; we may know and perceive his Love written in our Hearts and inward Part by saying open our Conscience unto his sight, and by communing with our own Spirit; when we are for a little while silent in our Chamber, and somewhat freed and separated from the Things of this World. All these ways God doth shew and manifest himself unto Mankind; so that they are without excuse.*

This may be thought proper to instruct and convert Heathens, for the neighbouring Nations which do grovel in the darkness of Popish ignorance, but doth not seem so applicable to our own Country, where the Scriptures are read and preached in a known Tongue, and they boast of their understanding thereof. But yet the Prophet saith peremptorily of his time, when they had the same privileges, *Therefore my People are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge.* Isa. 54. 13. He doth elegantly hint of the sterill ignorance of former, his own, and successive Generations, *Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? I did this at the first from the beginning? Have ye not understood from the Foundations of the Earth? Isa. 40. 21.* And when doth it were pointed him out in the following verse, *It is He that doth.* So it is said further down, *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* Hos. 4. 1. And what Paul witnesseth of his time, *Some have not the knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame.* 1 Cor. 15. 34. The same is ascribed at this very day, The chief and who call themselves the wise Men of this Nation, in this they are found wanting. *They have not the knowledge of God.* This is the manner of the People of England that dwell carelessly, that lay in their Hearts, We are, and none besides us. Here is a secret disowning of God above. Will they acknowledge him by a few acts of outward Worship; yet they confine all to that: But they have not to do with him in common actions, and general course of their Life. Here they conclude, they are left to themselves, *who is Lord over us?* Some others will have respect unto God in little trivial concerns; But for those of Greater Moment *They do not take counsel of him, that walk so go down into Egypt, and have not asked in my Mouth.* Isa. 30. 1, 2. They have first invaded this Nation, which occasioned and raised Wars in the Neighbouring Kingdoms: But they did not seek out of the Book of the Lord, whether such enterprises at first were just and lawful. Why *Ramoth in Gilead* was ours before? 1 Kings 22. 2. and under the subjection of the same King of this Nation. And though now it be in danger to fall into the hands of the King of Syria; yet they should have done well at the very beginning of all to have *acquiesced in the Word of the Lord.* verse, 5. and then all this might have been prevented at the very first rise. And now the Land is moved and divided and by reason of the stones thereof, it shaketh, yet it may be made up and healed by our God. Now *Urim and Thummim* are ceased; neither have we Warrant for additional Immediate Revelation. But God hath given us his standing Word in the Bible, which was confirmed by Signs and Miracles, and divers Gifts of the Holy Ghost: whereby God himself did bear witness to it, and did enact and confirm it as a Law and Direction to our fore-Fathers, and to us their Children, and to our Posterity for evermore. *He hath shewed thee O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love Mercy?* Mic. 6. 8. By this way and method of Righteous and independent accomodation Ireland might be sooner recovered and utterly disentangled from out of the hands of the French King, then by all the Multitude of Men and Horses, Ships and Carriages, the several Instruments of Death and Cruelty, all which only make a meer noise, and outward shew, but there is nothing more in it besides Destruction and Mischief.

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"But our Government was Governed by the Law of the most High God; and so they do not militate *Handly* with him: They denounce themselves in the Thing wherein they deal proudly: in so far as they do so, as in the right for his Glory: now will they obey him so far that he mayed their work in Truth: They have set up Kings, but not by me: They have made Princes that have not, Mai. 8. 4. which hath been particularly shewed with such Evidence and Demonstration of *Divine Truth*; that the sinners resort only to their old accustomed method of stubbornness, despising and utter contradiction; but still be remain firm and unshakable. And this hath been already done in two distinct Sessions of Parliament in two short Printed Testimonies of Truth; the first entitled a Supplemental Treat of Government &c. bearing date Jun: 4. 1689. 94. The second, Things Plain and Weighty referred to the consideration of both Houses March, 24. 1690. That peace and Happiness, Truth and Justice, Religion and Piety may be established among us for all Generations.

For the selfish way in the face; words in the place; where they are allowed every morning before their domestic afflictions, and therefore it may seem strange (unless an ungodly Enemy did blind their Eyes and Hearts, or hinder from discerning or turn them aside from the Truth) that when God hath shewed them a way in his Word and left the means in their Power; yet they did not go the right way to preserve, make better and perpetuate the Government; nor to Restore Peace, nor make War to cease; all which by the direction of Gods Word will be done, to the end of time, and to the ends of the Earth; where they shall see the *Name of the Lord from the West*: Isa. 49-19. and other Nations will also do the same; as they have from this understanding. People a right example: And further, there is the Promise of God that future Generations shall be *Godlike*; what we have happily begun. It is only to be desired, and to be wished them with goodness and with Justice, from best first care for good: To be observed according to their Laws, Rules and Directions which the Lord hath shewed and appointed in his Word; and then there would be continued peace and firm Settlement throughout these three Kingdoms, which are united unto another; and the like might be successively established throughout the whole Earth: *Let us now turn, and fix upon the first Foundation of Christianity.*

But otherwise there will be confusion, disturbance and unquietness of Times, with the manifold evils and Inconveniences thereof now in this place, besides the Wrath of God which hereafter cometh upon the Children of Disobedience. If People will go on still in their own Ways and according to their own Thoughts, this is Sin, Iniquity and Transgression all which the Lord God of Assemblies shall surely requite. *Now calleth for Wisdom in my place for Providence and severity and great Woe; They continue wicked and bring forth children they shall cast away Eggs, and make the Spiders Web. Herbs instead of their Eggs decay and that which is crafted twisted on into a Spider.* What is done by way of Violence, Humour and Stubbornness, will recoyl with greater force and smart upon themselves notwithstanding they cleave other men; and we see nothing as yet to befall them. Again, sometimes it is here said, that what they would suppress doth rise up with greater strength and danger against them. Or if with much laughter and contumacious, they would the Spiders Web, *For they shall not become Garments, neither shall they cover themselves with them, For they* it may just shew a thing over which orthodoxes will be long through. And it doth not answer the ends of Government as to give real peace and assured Preservation, Indeed it is a little better than nothing; for it is

Somewhat call over, which doth neither hide nakedness nor keep warm. And then it is a long time in translating and making; but it is all suddenly swept away, and profits nothing at all afterwards.

We have an example and instance hereof in the late Reign; when the King not observing the Rules of *Mercy, Judgment and Righteousness*, was not *Established in his Throne*, but hath been since removed. It is observable of those arbitrary and illegal Acts which he did, That he was two or three years in bringing them to pass; but they were undone again in two or three days, or less than a week. And he did offer to do all things for the future as became a Good King. God knows the secrets and intents of his Heart; and whether it was not more out of apprehension of danger than real Repentance; but that might have brought him to a sight of his Sin and Error, and then it would have been real and unfeigned: for affliction and fear are such a beginning of Repentance as God will accept of, and therefore we may allow the same to one another in things that they have trespassed against us. But it was not done according to Righteousness, Equity, Truth or Christian Forgiveness. In the great National Revolution was that fulfilled, *They passed from Evil to Evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord*, Jer. 9. 3. One unlawful extremum doth not excuse and justify another of despising the Oath of God, breaking his Covenant, and transgressing the Laws of Righteousness.

There are many Particulars and Circumstances of Sin and Evil of both sides which no man knoweth nor considereth the utmost Evil and Abomination of. But the Lord shall rehearse it, when he writeth up his People. He hath a Book of all Nations, Families and single Persons, with an account of the Time and Place they stand here on the Earth. As likewise he noteth the things that they have already done, & his all-knowing Spirit will bring out the very truth of all things: Though he now keeps silence, yet he will reprove the several Persons concerned herein; and let the things they have done before their eyes: For there is no respect of Persons with God; for as many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law Rom. 2. 12. But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of Persons, Col. 3. 25.

But to ledge as much as you will of this, it is Scripture said Cant. and is not minded; so may a common Thief or Murderer, or any Transgressor of man's Laws, for a time despise, and not regard them: yet Justice will at length apprehend and overcome him. In like manner, the Words and Statutes of the Lord will take hold of men of every Generation and Country; and as to each part of their Life after they are come to the knowledge of good and evil. Some do imagine that they shall escape, because they have the chief of the People, and the Multitude, and the fashion and the *Course of the World* on their side. They have Armies and Fleets; and such an one is driven away and oppressed, and of declining Years. He may be taken captive or Killed, or his day come to dye. What then? We have to do with an Almighty and Everliving God. Our selves and all the many Inhabitants of the Earth, are but a parcel of *living Men and Women*, and so take them altogether, notwithstanding their numbers, they are all contemptible and of small Power. And those who in this time of Trial will follow a *Multitude to do Evil*, to side with the *course of the World* in their Transgression and Unrighteousness; As sure as God hath given a Law to mankind, and his Word is true, this is the ready way to be *condemned with the World*. Let men in the mean while make what alterations they will, all is but as a company of Worms of the Earth, who vainly think to change Times,

Laws and Ordinances; But they are all just like so many Ants, which are a long time bringing little Sticks and Straws together; which is all suddenly blown away with one single blast of Wind; much less will it stand useful; or at that day when our *God shall come*, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him, *Psalm 50. 3.* There can be no such thing as a Law, unless it be founded on Divine Right and Eternal Truth.

And therefore it was a foolish and wicked Imagination of such who know not God, and did conclude it impertinent to bring Scripture to manifest that in the late Revolution of putting down one King, and setting up another, the Nation of England hath not done Righteousness; for how could this be known otherwise than by Scripture, the highest Law, which God himself hath given to mankind of every Nation, Country and Language. Every thing is to be tried and judged by this supreme Rule of good and evil, truth and falsehood, right and wrong. We are to be accountable to God for all our Actions, and must receive according to what we have done. It is God who establishes Kingdoms and Property; and his Dominion over us is above all man's Government; for this is inferior, and ought only to be in subordination under God; from whom men receive authority to make National Laws, and to exercise their own Rule and Dominion: The great Law-giver hath kept this in his own Power; for his Word and Commandment is left for Admonition and Reproof, that the Kings and Judges of the Earth do only that which is just and lawful; but if they do not, they are warned to amend; otherwise they will be condemned.

God himself is the Congregation of the mighty: he judgeth among the Gods, Psalm 82. 1. There is an assertion of his own Government over all Kings and Magistrates, unto whom he vouchsafes to give his own Name. And then comes in afterwards by way of Reproof, *How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the Persons of the wicked, Psalm 82. 2.* Then succeeds his Command, *Defend the Poor and Fatherless, ye judges of the Earth, and Needs; Deliver the Poor and Needy; rid them out of the Hand of the wicked, Psalm 82. 3, 4.* And as all Scripture is profitable for Correction, for instruction in Righteousness, for to order to them; it doth take notice of what is amiss, *they were one another will they understand, they will not; is darkness, all the Foundations of the Earth are out of course, Psalm 11. 3.* and throughout Gods Word and Law there are directions and commands to let them in right order again. But that remains in a dead letter, and it is not faithfully handled nor universally applied; for the Priests have been so used in the Law. They have kept back some part of it, and have not made known the whole counsel of God unto the People: And also according to the manner of teaching of *Mal. 2. 2.* They have accepted Faint, by applying it superficially and remotely to the higher sort of People: As they have done and do not cease to do for the *Wicked for Reward*, for some Place or preferment either already bestowed, or in hope and expectation to be given. And so it comes to pass that Gods faithful Messengers (who have appeared in their several Generations as singular, are persecuted and persecuted. Now God doth He first and hide himself to let what the Children of Men will do. Though it be the secret continued Prayer of his Ministers and servants, *Prayer of God, Judge the Earth; for thou hast heard all Nations, Psalm 82. 1.* Yet He will not before the appointed time. But his Law is given in the mean while, and he doth prove the doings of the Children of Men.

There hath been a long and continued controversy in the World through out former Generations, and in all Nations, and the same continues this day, not only

amongst Heathen, Mahometans, Papists, but to our greater shame, even in the more pure reformed Churches, and at this very instant is in the Land of our own Nativity: the Subtance whereof is to this following effect. Whether the Laws of God or man shall have the superiority and take place. Whether his Light is to be extinguished, and his Truthsified which he would send out, *Psal. 43. 3. if it should reprove the Darkness and Wickedness that is in Palaces and great Houses, or manifest the Error of their corrupt ways.* But mention is made, *vers. 1. of an angry Nation, and a deceitful and unjust Man.* They would anger him, if they could reach up and pull down the High and Lofty One, or lead away captive (as hath been done with dumb Idols) the living and Almighty God; But because that is not in their Power; They will do as far as is suffered; They act in opposition to the Father of Lights, James. 1. 17. and do what lieth in them to prevent the rising of the Sun of Righteousness; and afterwards stop out the shining Thereof. When he that dwelleth between the Cherubims would *show forth* *Psal. 80. 1.* They will hinder it what they can; But God doth suffer it so far, for the next thing is, *he will stir up his strength* *vers. 2.* and then poor Creatures, who now provoke the Lord to Jealousie, will find that they are not stronger then he: in this their short time, they will not bear that word which convinces of Sin and Unrighteousness; But how then will they endure his Indignation and Punishment; which that was to warn them of, and put them in a way how they might escape. *Even thy Truth O my God.* *Psal. 71. 22.* is called a *false and feigned libel*, it doth discover their own Falshood and Hypocrisie. And it must skulk about in Corners, or be conveyed in a secret place, though there is stamp upon it the Image and superscription of the Great and Invisibile King; but they are *fearful*, *Rev. 21. 8.* to own and confess it before the World; for they fear the Displeasure of Men more then the Displeasure of God. They would have Gods service be brought down to Mans purposes, and be so modelled as to be made consistent with the foolish policy and misapprehended welfare of a Nation. These things are strange to mention, but themselves know, that their inward Thought, Pride and Rebellion of Heart is, that though they will acknowledge with their Tongue and Lips that the Most high ruleth over the Kingdoms of Men, and his Dominion is above and over all; yet they would have it so far come under theirs, That if Gods Laws are contrary, and not agreeable to humane constitutions, They must not be spoken of nor laid before our Princes and our Priests, our Lords and Counselliers for fear of Punishment, and being prosecuted as one against the Government; when themselves in this very thing are against the Government of their God. *Alas! How do a small Number of Grasshoppers here on the Earth think of, and would do toward the great Lord of the World? How do men that shall die, and must appear before him in judgment, demean themselves towards him now they are but a little while in the way? Arise O Lord, let not man prevail, let the Heathen be judged in thy sight, Put them in fear O Lord, that the Nations may know themselves to be but men.* *Psal. 9. 19. 20.* Again thus much is signified by what is written, *He ruleth by his Power for ever, his Eyes behold the Nations: let not the Rebellers exalt themselves,* *Psal. 66. 7.* And though the Nations be never so angry, yet now is the time come that God shall take to himself Great Power and Reign. A little opening and appearance thereof doth now begin in this place and Nation, which will be likewise followed in the Habitable parts of the Earth.

For the matter of contention is not so much between the two Kings, who are both Pot-wards of the Earth, and shall each of them severall be brought down to the

Part of the Pix, although now they have their Armies and cause their Terror in the Land of the Living. Cease ye from man whose Breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? We ought utterly to draw off from the Persons of each, and not to have them in admiration, and not name them more then needs must; for by so doing men do forget and lose the knowledge and fear of the Lord; and are not so sensible of the Glory of his Majesty and infinite Greatness. But the thing which the Lord doth require of our Land is, that she do not depart from and forsake his Eternal and Immutable Rules of Judgment and Righteousness, and that his People be very diligent to keep and so do all that is written in the Law of Moses, that ye turn not aside this or that to the right hand or to the left, Josh. 23. 6. So whatever is further commanded in the Book of Plains, the Writings of the Prophets, and the Gospel of Christ declared by the Evangelists and Apostles. All things are to be done according to his revealed Will, now a little before he ariseth to shake terribly the Earth; for the Word of the Lord is right, and all his Works are done in truth, he loveth Righteousness and Judgment Psal. 33. 4. 5. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his Steps, Psal. 85. 13. Gods Work ought to be done in his own prescribed method, according to what is written, which is so plain and easie to be understood, that way-faring men, though Fools, shall not err therein, unless they run out of willing and set purpose.

Whereas heretofore we were disobedient and did not all things according to the Pattern shewed us; we are to acknowledge our Iniquity and Transgression, and from henceforth forever, we and our Children are to promise unto the Lord and keep it, to do according as he hath said and commanded in his Word; which we ought in like manner to obey, as if we heard his Voice from Heaven. As we daily Pray, so we are likewise to do (lest we be found Mockers and Dissemblers with God, and have our portion with Hypocrites and Unbelievers) his will on Earth. Which again is not to be measured by what is acted on this Stage of Sin and Confusion, or publicly done in the place where Satan's Seat and Kingdom is; but as it is clearly written and manifestly revealed by the Word and Spirit of God, which came down from above, and knoweth what is God's will. And what is done in Heaven, the same is expected here.

In the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word shall be established; and we have three holy Men of God, who were moved by the holy Ghost, and give attestation and confirmation to the same thing. He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are Judgment, a God of Truth, and without Iniquity, just and right is he, Deut. 32. 4. The Works of his Hands are Variety and Judgment, and all his Commandments are sure: They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in Truth and Uprightness, Psal. 111. 7, 8. By this it appears, that our late Revolution is none of God's work, in which he is well pleased. For I the Lord love Judgment, I hate Robbery for burns Offering; and I will direct their work in Truth, and I will make an Everlasting Covenant with them, Isa. 61. 8. So that if People would do the work of God, and come to Settlement and Stability of Times; they must only use such means all along as are good, true, just and lawful, and none others. These are to be known by God's Law only; for (as aforesaid) that is the Supreme Rule of Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong.

14. 8. 2.

And if thence it doth appear, that this Nation hath trespassed against their God, and have forsaken and resisted his Ordinance by putting down that Power (which is ascribed, Rom. 13. 1. to be of God, though it was an Heathen at the very time)

Which be a Sin and Transgression, then there is no hope to avoid the present Displeasure, and escape the future Punishment of God, otherwise than by making a Covenant with our God; and by restoring the King to his right; and henceforward to tremble at the Commandments of our God, and to be done according to his Law, Ezra. 10. 3. The Laws of God are to be set before People, and they are to be exhorted to the Observance of them; but still men have their Liberty and full Freedom of Action. If they will not do so out of Conscience and Obedience to God, they may let it alone; Or (to speak plainly, deliberately and truly in the Gentile dialect) choose and be damned, according to what they have done, and involved themselves in from Rom. 13. 2. It is at their own Peril and Danger. The divine Promises and Threatnings are to be used only; but no outward force and compulsion, for the right Christian Religion doth not allow of any. And here is a Threatning as true as Gospel, which lies expressly against the Nation and People of England. * The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, Rom. 1. 18. It is only revealed and made known here; but it is to be executed and felt in another Place. So though We are in the true Reformed Religion; yet We are not (under the aforesaid Penalty), to continue and practise any Unrighteousness towards our King, who is a Member of a false, superstitious and corrupted Church. Thou shalt abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege? So they should not commit any Injustice, Wrong, Sin or Evil. Then shalt thou keep the Law through breaking of the Law, Dishonourst thou God? for the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you. In this National Corruption there have been no less than five Laws of the second Table expressly violated, as by Dishonouring of and Disobedience to Parents, Committing of Murder, Theft, bearing False Witness, Coveting and taking possession of another's Inheritance, who was greater than Naboth, and his inferior did it. Again, if the solemn Oath hath been despised, and the Covenant broken (whereof God alone is to judge and determine of both files) then as sure as God is (which is as evident as the Heavens He created and we see, or that he laid the Foundations of the Earth which we tread on) so certainly will He vengeance it upon their own Head.

Unless all this is prevented by true and unfeigned Repentance, in order to which it is necessary not only to be sorry, or secretly to bewail, but further to undo the Fault as much as it can be. And as God was dishonoured publicly, in like manner to regain his Favour. They should publicly acknowledge their Iniquity to their God, that they have transgressed against him by forsaking his Ordinance, despising his Oath, and breaking his Covenant. To speak after the manner of men, That God should have repair for his hurt Majesty, which they offended, and despised, and also have Glory given unto him by confessing their own shame; for we must do as much to reconcile our selves to an offended God, as the Great Ones of the Earth require from all that displease them. And this is the true design and end of Confession. Those Things done in Private, may be there acknowledged; but in other Things, the acknowledgment should be altogether as Publick as the sin was, according to Lev. 26. 40. Josh. 7. 19. Ezra 10. 2, 3, 10, 11. Mark 1. 5. Acts 19. 18. And where any thing hath been taken away from any man by False Accusation, He is to be restored to it again; and the very Truth of all Things to be brought out, and to be known

openly before the World. It might be so ordered, and consented unto, That They have Deputies, faithful, courageous and learned, to implead one another before the Great Council of the Nation, and Witnesses examined upon Oath of both sides. Which would be a more Christian and Rational way, than to lead forth Armies to push at and gore one another, like a multitude of Bulls and Calves of the People, Psal. 68. 30. Man was born more naked and unarmed than those dull Creatures; but they have found Instruments of Death to knock down and butcher one another.

And though in these days of Wickedness and Ignorance there is such *trusting in the Arm of Flesh, and Children do rise up against their Parents*, to cause them to be put to Death, and sanctifie it with a Fast, and then again after the Turkish manner, conclude of the Righteousness of their Cause by the Success and event thereof; Or think to escape because they fulfill the Scriptures, whereas *Judas* did the same. But the same Word saith, It would have been good for him if he had never been born. We are not to be surprized or doubtful as to this; for it was the Question of old time, *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? Thou hast plained them, yea, they have taken root, they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit*, Jer. 12. 1. 2. And they keep for a while what they obtain by lying *Flatteries*, (Dan. 11. 21.) Diffimulation, Carnal Policy and Wisdom. But if these were detected, the other would not stand and endure. As may be gathered (let him that readeth, understand) from what is spoken of in the Prophet *Daniel*, *It cast down the Truth to the Ground, and it perished and prospered*, Dan. 8. 12. And then indeed Transgression may prevail and spread abroad. But if Truth were not fallen in the Street, and Equity could enter; if Truth might once maintain its Ground, and Righteousness take place; if as soon as the Lord gave the Word, *great would be the company of those that published it*, Psal. 68. 11. The next immediate consequence is, *Kings of Armies did flee apace*, Vers. 12. And in a little process of Time it would be fulfilled all the World over; for so, *the Kings were assembled, they passed by together, they saw it, and so they marvelled; They were troubled and baffled away; Fear took hold upon them there, and Pain as of a Woman in Travail*, Psal. 48. 4, 5, 6. And though now the Kings set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed; yet his single Word and Truth, if it had a free course and universal spreading, would scatter them all.

As of old Time, when the Lord looked into the Host of the *Egyptians*, through the Pillar of Fire and of the Cloud, he troubled the Host of the *Egyptians*; so it is now at this very day. When he sends forth a Manifestation of his Word, and displays a *Banner of Truth* (which is always done by some outward Instrument) it doth cause Disturbance in the Minds of Men, and is thought to break their Peace, because it doth somewhat interrupt their security and ignorance in Sin. It doth fill their Souls with fear and doubt, and there is a worse restlessness within then Swords and Scaves do cause among the multitude. And this is but a slight and transient fore-runner of that *Ignominy and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, which shall be upon those who are Contemners, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness*.

Indeed such may be mad, or foolish and inconsiderate, but they can never be truly courageous, unless they are suspected, and made blind by Drunkenness, Pride, Unbelief, gross Ignorance. And when this last a little wears off, they are furnished with strong *Delusions* that they should believe a Lye; They receive in false and mistaken Notions; or they are feared by the close hidden arts of Hypocritie. For they cannot endure to consider of thoroughly what is commanded, *That no man* (of what

ever

ever rank or degree) so beyond and defraud his Brother (muchless a Father) in any manner, because *that the Lord is the avenger of all such*: as we have also fore-warned you and testified, 1 Thes. 4. 6. now this third time. And they being upon the brink to appear before that God, and (as we are here told) subject to Evils from the World to come; It is a marvellous Policy and destructive Mischief so to beguile that they fall in before they took any care to prevent, or were thoroughly put in mind, and truly informed hereof. It must be barbarous, and a siding with the Deceiver of mankind, to contrive on set purpose to keep People ignorant; and as they think for the better accomplishment of a present Design to suffer so many to fall into the future misery, and to let them perish and be destroyed for want of the right knowledge of things. A report and glimpse of Eternity will more startle than the flashing and noise of Guns, and the doubtful uncertainty of what kind of endless Life they are just enuring upon, will cause *great Thought and searching of Hearts*; which is more sensible than Wounds and Blows to the outward Man: For it is at their Peril (without foolish jesting, or meer outward Laughter, or a proud contemptuous Smile) if the Kings of the Earth, and the Great Men, and the Rich Men, and the Chief Captains; and the Mighty Men should not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; for such will hide and fear as much as they brave it out, and seem resolute now. But if they would indeed be preserved from the Wrath of the Lamb, they must yield Obedience, agree what He hath commanded in the Gospel. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*, Mat. 7. 12. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12. 18. *Render therefore to all their Dues*, Rom. 13. 7. All fair and honest means ought to be used, first to prevent those mischievous effects of Bloodshed, Poverty, Sickness, continual Fears, which may terminate in temporal Desolation and eternal Destruction. And even now these Wounds, and Bruises, and purifying Sores are broke out, they may yet be closed, and bound up and mollified with Ointment, instead of the long, severe and destructive Remedies. And if men will not do according to the Will of God, and of Christ, take heed lest that also come upon you, which is spoken of in the following Verse, *Your Country is desolate, your Cities are burnt with Fire; your Land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by Strangers*, Isa. 1. 7. When a Fire or Plague is begun, People do endeavour to extinguish and stop it as soon as they can. The drawn Sword may be put up in its Sheath, and the grievousness of War might cease; and (as aforesaid) Things should be done by way of just Treaty, and prudent Accomodation.

I am for Peace, but when I speak, they are for War: Nay, They will do purposely, and more violently against what is here said, because These things are laid together by a small and despicable Person, whose Spirit God hath stirred and raised him up as an Instrument to convey forth his Truth unto Men; for I speak nothing of my self, but from his Word only. And therefore their Murmuring, and Despising, and Rebellion are against the Lord. This ought to be done by some one, yea, and by many. But whoever had first appeared to cry aloud, and spare not; Lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet to shew the People of England their Transgressions and their Sins; The same Reproaches and false Suggestions would have been against them also. For when People have no mind to receive and obey the Message, it is easie to take exceptions at the Post or Officer who brings it. But the all-knowing and all-wise God will not be trifled with, nor deceived: The Great King of all the Earth will find and bring out those his Enemies, who would not have him Reign over them,

but do speak against, and evil intreat the Messengers whom he hath sent;

And now to manifest unto the World that I am sent, and to make evident my Commission, I do declare (as I will answer it before him who is appointed Judge of the quick and dead that it is contained in the twenty third Chapter of *Matthew*, and the thirty fourth Verse, where Christ promises to the several Generations, *Behold I send unto you Prophets, and Wise-men, and Scribes*. And I do affirm according to Truth, without boasting of my self, that I do come under the last denomination of a *Scribe*. I may just observe, that the Prophetical Office was chiefly to reprove Sin and Transgression, and also they did fore-tell some future events, which were not presently fulfilled. The first hath been done without Partiality and Respect of Persons; and also some things have been spoken of, which are yet to come. Moreover if there have been any Words of Knowledge and Wisdom delivered, let others judge. But a *Scribe* is such an one who is instructed in, and reasons out of the Law; which in the very same what I have done as to National Affairs; For the several things which I have published to the World are an opening, and alledging, and reasoning out of the Scriptures, the Law of the Most high God.

I have been educated at the School of the Prophets; for I was six Years at *Magdalen Hall in Oxford*, and took one degree: I was there twice sworn the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy. And now it comes to pass that the same Oath which such a vast multitude of Priests and People have despised, hath taken hold of me, and hath obliged me to act after this manner. For I did swear twice in the Reign of *Charles the second*, *Him and them* (intending his Heirs and Successors, under which his Brother is comprised) *will I defend, according to the utmost of my Power*. Now the Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal, but Spiritual, and no other ought to be used according to the right Christian Religion. For these last six Years I have been at several times resident in and about the City of London: I was entred into the Society of the *Middle-Temple*, and observed the Customs of the House for several successive Terms; and I did for a while study the Statute and Common Laws of this Nation: So that I came all along in a regular way, and was furnished from the Laws of God and Man, to have pleaded the Cause of the *Oppressed King*. And for my part, being assured only of the Protection of the invisible God, and trusting to that Promise, *His Truth shall be thy Shield and Buckler*, *Psal. 91. 4*. I was not afraid to speak openly and boldly as I ought to speak. Though both Houses of Parliament, by reason of contrary Practice (as may be understood from *Fer. 2. 26. Mark 8. 38.*) were ashamed to bear such Words; which would have reproved, and set in order before them their Sin and Transgression in the very same place where it was committed. And so they may still, if they are willing to run the danger of rising up to everlasting Shame and Contempt, and have the Son of man be ashamed of them, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with the holy Angels. *saith the Lord, And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my Words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him*, *Deut. 18. 19*. Now that Prophet was Christ, who hath conveyed down to others the same Authority and Commission, *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, *Luke 10. 16*. For such would not hear Christ himself, if they had lived in the same Generation with him: Neither would they be persuaded, if Christ should come once again into the World after the same manner as he did; But his next coming is unto Judgment.

Peradventure, our Lords and Counsellors did go upon Error and Deceit of their

own Heart, and did therefore refuse to hear the Law of their God; because they might think that if the Word was not proclaimed and spoken out *viva voce*, Th-y might then more safely contemn God's Word and Commandment, and have such an excuse for their Sin; not considering the God with whom we have to do: *Who will disband our Thoughts afar off*, Psal. 139. 2. and knows that themselves only hindered, and would not suffer his Word to be spoken out. For I delivered in Printed Cases, and also sent a written Petition to the same purpose: And when I could not have it delivered in and read, I ordered my Petition to be printed and given to the Members severally (if perhaps any would move thereon) though I knew before this was contrary to Custom and Usage, and therefore I was at first unwilling so to do; but this kind of necessity and urgency did press me forward. For my part I would leave no means undone to discharge my Conscience fully towards God: But He knows that I was directed and put in mind long before, *That this is a rebellious People, lying Children, Children that will not bear the Law of the Lord*, Isa. 30. 9. And thereupon according to what is said in the foregoing Verse, and also I was shewed the same in the Light of God's Spirit, *New go and get it printed in a Book*; which I accordingly did, and delivered to the several Members on April 2. 1690. for which I was committed to Custody (it being by them called a Seditious Pamphlet) and so I remained under confinement for four Weeks, and afterwards was with great care sent down into the Country, to be remote from London. I gave away about an hundred of those stitche Books, and would have more ready if I had been permitted; for I ordered a thousand, which were more than sufficient for all the Representatives of the whole Nation: But however, they had sufficient to notify it unto the residue of the Members; and they may yet understand and be instructed aright, that the Word (which God sends through a contemptible earthen Vessel) spoken (or written, for that longer remains) is *steadfast*, and every Transgression and Disobedience shall receive a just recompence of Reward.

As they do all profess themselves to be Members of the Church of England, so they are to be advertised of somewhat out of her Liturgy in the Exhortation before the Communion; *Therefore if any of you be a Blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of his Word, repent you of your Sins, or else come not to that holy Table*. But because ye have the outward Administration thereof in your own Power; and your Bishops, Priests and Deacons are involved in, and carried away with the same corruption; They will nevertheless dispence the Holy Sacrament unto you, though ye do still continue in and practice the same Sins. But yet be ye assured and forewarned from the truth and determination of God, that notwithstanding ye do still partake of the outward part or sign, yet ye will be deprived of the thing signified thereby: That is, now of the true Grace and Spirit of God, and hereafter (so speak in plain terms) ye will be *excommunicated and shut out from Heaven*. And ye can no more enter there against his Decree and Will, than now ye can fly up, and of your own strength cause the Heavens to be opened to receive you. God will not admit them there, who would not suffer him to reign over them here on Earth by his Word, and the Messengers appointed to publish and make it known; who are necessary for the exercise and administration of his Kingdom and Dominion over Men. I speak to our Rulers, judge ye in your selves. How would any earthly King receive it, to have his Ambassadors and Officers, yea, an inferiour Herald or Poste disturbed, and interrupt and stop in the execution of his business? We are his Servants, and must do according to what our great Lord and Master sends;

us; and if any Injury is offered us, he takes it upon himself, and will punish according to Mark 12. 4, 5, 9. And if my self should be *killed or scourged, or persecuted from place to place*: whosoever shall presume to do it, either secretly or openly, God knows it all one, they must also take what follows, *That upon you may come all the Righteous Blood shed upon the Earth*, Mat. 23. 35. The greatest Emperors, Kings, Princes and Potentates will find one higher than they. The Inferiour Judges, Magistrates and Officers will meet with one, whom they were as much bound to obey as their respective Masters. Great swelling Words will be changed into doleful Cries and Lamentations: Instead of domineering and insulting over those whom they had once Prisoners before them, will succeed trembling at their presence; and such will be strangely abashed to see them become their Judges. God will arise and maintain his own Cause, and the boldest Persecutors of them all shall at length find, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. 2. 8. He had better run his own Finger into his own Eyes and bore them out, rather than do those things to be cast into Hell-Fire. This harsh, but true expression may be further gathered from Mat. 18. 6, 7, 8, 9.

And though it is in a less degree of Reproach, Slander or Reviling, Curses or hard Speeches against the Person of such an one: Surely, men know not, nor consider what they do herein: *Because for thy sake I have born Reproach, Shame hath covered my Face: I am become a Stranger unto my Brethren, and an alien unto my Mother's Children. For the Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up; and the Reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me*, Psal. 69. 7, 8, 9. To speak against, or evil of any one, who doth not handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the Truth, commending himself to every man's Conscience in the sight of God, and to reanimate upon the Instrument which conveys it forth, because the Word convinces of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgement: This doth first manifest their own guilt and contrary practice, and to reply against it, is to reply against God, Rom. 9. 20. It is answering again and disputing, and a kind of blaspheming the Holy One of Israel: For such are resolved not to do the thing, and are so far from coming to Repentance, and turning from their Iniquities that they harden and confirm themselves yet more in their sinful ways. *They will utter and speak hard things, and the Workers of Iniquity boast themselves*, Psal. 94. 4. See vers. 20. And these are the hard Speeches which Ungodly Sinners have spoken against him, Jude 15. This shews the exceeding sinfulness of Reproach, which hath more or less aggravation, according to the particular kind of sayings; which were invented and promoted by the Father of Lyes; who is suffered to resist the Serpents of God, and doth it with an intent and purpose to make them as Lysars, and through them to derogate from God's Glory and Truth: that, if possible, the Word which goeth forth out of his Mouth should return to him void, and not accomplish that which he pleases, nor prosper in the thing whereto he sends it: for to this tend the Devices and Wickednesses of Satan, the adversary of God's Kingdom.

Jer. 18. 18.

But let those who have any reverence or fear of God, take heed how they speak of him and his Truth, which appears forth through his Servant: for that indeed, and not so much the outward Person, is the Thing chiefly admired at. *For as a Wonder* (in the new Translation it is *Monster*) *unto many; but thou art my strong Refuge*, Psal. 71. 7. For whether we be bi-sides our selves, it is to God, 2 Cor. 5. 13. Christ himself had the Imputation of Madness. And when his Friends (in the Marginal Reading it is *Kinsmen*) heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him; for they said, *Ho*

He is besides himself; Mark 9. 21. The Scribes who understood a little more, did blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, because they said, he hath an unclean Spirit. Verily, you. And to say, such an one is an Antichrist or Jesuit, in the plain and proper signification is to affirm, He is possesst with the Spirit of the Devil, such as did reside amongst the Oracles of Old, or in the Apostles Temples: And therefore though it be a gentle and hasty Word, People should be exceeding cautious as whom they afflict it. For we must expunge many places out of Scripture, confirmed by experience, if we deny the workings of God's Spirit in these dayes; but it is subject unto, & keeps within the bounds of his Revelation. And then if this or that Person should have the true Spirit of God and of Christ, it would be the very same Blasphemy. But if they have called the Master of the Household Bezebub; much more will they call those of the Household. We read again, that Himself hath the same double Reproach cast on him: And many of them said, He hath a Devil, and is mad; why bear ye him? John 10. 20. If we go back to the Old Testament, we shall find somewhat to the same purpose. The young man, the Prophet, was thus filled by one of the Captains of the Host that were sitting. Wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? 2 Kings 9. 11. A short question, and exactly agreeable to the Language of the proud men of these dayes. Again, we read of one who sent Letters unto all the People who are at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the Son of Mafiah the Priest, and to all the Priests to put them in mind; whereas they were Officers in the House of the Lord for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a Prophet; that thou shouldst put him in Prison, and in the Stocks; Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah, of Anathoth, which maketh himself a Prophet to you? Jer. 29. 25, 26, 27. But it may be afterwards seen in the following Verses what is pronounced on Shemaiah the Nehelamite, because he thus taught Rebellion against the Lord. Again, it is written, The Prophet is a fool, The Spiritual Man is mad, for the multitude of thine Iniquity, and the great Hatred, Hos. 9. 7. Here is added the very reason of throwing out such a false Reproach, viz. Multitude of Iniquity and Great Hatred; for sin, when it is committed, doth leave guilt behind: And when it comes to be reproved and manifested, that is stirred up: And then there is Conviction, Shame, Fear and Anguish of Spirit; all which are very troublesome and disquieting, and thence doth arise an hatred and enmity against such who do this Office. Saith our Lord and Saviour, The world hateth me, because I Testify of it that the Works thereof are evil, Joh. 7. 7. But they deserve more to be hated who do the evil, then Christ who Testifyeth of it. Blessed are ye when Men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their Company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your Name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake; (for doing so, as we have him and them for an Example) In the like manner did their Fathers hate the Prophets, Luk. 6. 22, 23. Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness's sake: Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, Mat. 5. 10, 11. for being faithful in that Ministry to which he hath called us. Here it is most comprehensively expressed, and extends unto all manner of evil and fallhood, which the utmost wit and malice of limited Creatures can invent and speak forth. And therefore is such an one of a sound mind and clear understanding (I speak of my self, and of the Things which I have written touching the King) It is a contradiction and abominable lie to say, he is an unclean Man; But yet a malicious and false imputation may be cast and endeavoured to be fastened on any one. And also, what is a little new or unusual, or doth somewhat exceed common apprehension, may seem to the vulgar sort, yea, and be called by them mad.

ness; but this is so trivial, that it is sufficient answer only to take notice of such an Ignorant Calumny.

I am liable to be represented, as one of different Notions, because of a different shape by reason of my personal Deformity and Lameness; whereby I do vary somewhat from the rest of mankind. But the Lord is the Maker of us all. And he who fashioned me in the Womb, and took me out of my Mother's Bowels, might have so formed them who either have already, or shall reproach me in this wife. They are to remember, that themselves also are in the Body subject to sickness from within, to Hurt and Casualty from without. I was not born so for mine own Sin, nor for my Parents, but that the Works of God should be made manifest. And it may be the more remembered (I hope not for a Witness and Testimony against them) that such an one came down to the place of the whole Assembly of this Nation, with the Truth which God had shewed unto his Servant and with his Staff in his Hand: He had no other Weapon, and would not have had that, but he went Halting as did the Patriarchs whole words are here made use of. And this will be a further sign and token, that they cannot pretend Ignorance of the man, or his business in the day of Recapitulation of all things.

Gen. 32.10.

But the greater strangeness is imagined to be within me; I have written the great things of thy Law, but they were counted as a strange thing. Hos. 8. 12. said the Prophet in his time; and within the compass of this year, the like imputation hath been cast upon my particular Person, for what I have brought out of the same Book of Scripture. But to cause the Reproach offered by them to cease, and to turn their own reproach upon them, Dan. 11. 38: I will tell any one that thinks so, where the strangeness of all lieth, even in Mans Transgression. Either the not observance of what is commanded, or doing those things which are contrary to the Laws of God and Truth. In Transgressing and Lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the Heart words of falsehood. By not doing of Righteousness, but forsaking the Ordinance of their God, nor taking heed to the Ordinances of Justice. It is Mens strange kind of actions, which do draw and necessitate from my Tongue and Pen what may seem strange kind of expressions: For I do only speak of them according to their very nature, and as they are done. But more especially when the Thoughts of their Heart come to be revealed, and those secret imaginations are made known by that Word which is a discernor of the Thoughts and intents of the Heart, there must be yet more strange kind of expressions, odd passages, uncouth, uncommon, they know not what to make off or term them. If one should mention how they fret themselves, and are apt to curse their God and their King, he would pass for an hard saying; when all this is far worse in them than to utter it, in those who only take notice thereof in order to admonish them to stand in awe and sin not. All the strangeness is in themselves; and accordingly the Spirit who searches all things and speaks the very Truth, calls them *strange Children*, Psal. 134. 1. For nothing can be more strange then that Man should be Disobedient to his God, that the Children which the Lord hath brought up should rebel against him. But further they must be known, and also spoken forth in order to the casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ. When these Imaginations and Thoughts are clearly and truly brought out to publick view, they quite fall to the Ground, and never rise again.

I appeal to any one who knows Truth, and can apprehend common sense that in the

the several things I have published to the World, I have all along delivered my self in plain, common, obvious, familiar and intelligible Expressions. I have spoken forth the Words of Truth and Sobriety; though it is hard to express the mad and foolish Actions of mankind to the very Life and Reality, and not to be repeated so ones self. All those that fear God, and those that have known his Testimonies, Psal. 119. 79. can also judge of these things. And though what I have more lately done, in opposing the High and Universal Corruption of this present Time, hath met with Scife and Contention, Scurrillness and despiing, all kinds of Reproach and contrary Usage; yet the Reason of all is, because People are Contemptuous, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Rom. 2. 8. They have made void God's Law, Psal. 119. 126. and his Commandments of none effect: Therefore the Law is slack'd, and Judgment hath never so far as for the Wicked doth compass about the Righteous, therefore wrong Judgments proceedeth, Hab. 1. 4. For they have indeed acted contrary to what the Law commands and requires. Nevertheless, all knowing People may yet judge of whatever I have here said, or in the two fore-cited Treatises concerning our Great National Sin and Transgression, by this certain and infallible Rule of the Prophet, *I will be true from our Iniquities, and understand thy Truth*, Dan. 9. 13. Then it will appear unto them, as clear and evident, as the most plain and simple proposition now doth. If People will not do this, but go on still with all deceitfulness of Unrighteousness, there is no Remedy, but they shall perish. *Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved; and for this cause God shall send them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lye: That they all might be damned, who believe not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness*, 2 Thel. 2. 10, 11, 12. All which Words are observable, and very terrible.

To unfold the Mystery of Iniquity a little, and somewhat to lay open the working of Satan with all deceitfulness of Unrighteousness: It will be necessary to observe with what kind of words he tempted our Parents in the first Transgression; and hath all along, and doth yet continually set himself against God's ways, to keep up the mist of Ignorance and Unbelief, to hold people in their Perplexity and Confusion of Disobedience and Transgression; and he doth use all means to hinder men from coming to Repentance, and the Knowledge of the Truth. And as God would accomplish that by right Words, so he hath endeavoured to imitate in like things, by tempting Mankind to do after their own Thoughts, and after the Imaginations of their own Evil and Corrupt Heart: And also his emissaries

go about subverting People with false, corrupt and deceitful Words, which are, and may be published with Licence and Authority. But the Inhabitants of his Earth are ashamed, or afraid to receive the Truth of him, who is Lord and Governour of the World, who filleth all Places and all Things with his presence. Poor Creatures! *Your Hour* will quickly be at an end, and the *Power of Darkness* will be suddenly gone off; and then ye shall remember and discern, which Master it was better to have served, God or the World.

As the *Man of Sin* doth so mightily beat off People from the Scriptures, because his own Ways and Corruption are so much condemned therein: So do others at this day for the very same Reason, put an opprobrious term upon the Language of the holy Ghost: or it is not so gentle and fashionable, nor agreeable with the Humor of the Age. They cry it out for impertinent and foolish; yea, there are an hundred kind of Scornes, and like sayings, whereby the Word of the Lord is made a Reproach to me, and a Derision daily, Jer. 20. 8. They reject and will have none of it. But what saith the answer of God unto them? *Hear O Ears, Behold I will bring Evil on this People, even the Fruit of their own Thoughts, because they have not hearkened to my Words, nor to my Law, but rejected it,* Jer. 6. 19. All their other Religion is vain; their Worship and Devotion is to no purpose, for it doth not please God. *Your burnt-Offerings are not acceptable, nor your Sacrifices sweet unto me,* Ver. 20. *He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer shall be abomination,* Prov. 28. 9. Even at this day, and in this Nation; The Wise Men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; Lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what Wisdom is in them? Jer. 8. 9. It would be Nonfence, and a Lye to say, if one heard a Lawyer cite several express Acts of Parliament, according to the very Sense, and the plain and common Understanding of the same Words, yet such an one did not argue to the Purpose; for all is foreign and impertinent besides what is thence alledged. And so our Great Lawmakers and Counsellors are very fond of their own Constitutions, to do all things exactly according to the form and direction thereof; But they did not attend, how in the late Revolution, they did at once strike at all the Statute and common Laws of this Kingdom, which are said to be vested in *Sermonis Regis*; and also they did unhinge those very Laws, which do give and adjust to themselves their own respective Honours and Estates, and establish Property; And therefore they should do well to lift the right Door again upon the Hinges. This is Truth, though it may seem a kind of Human Reasoning; but yet doth shew how

Judgment

Judgment is turned away backward, and Justice standeth afar off, and Equity cannot enter.

If our Proud Men think themselves too good to be Subjects and Servants unto God, yet, whether they will or not, they are his Creatures: He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. There is no removing the Government off from his Shoulders, nor getting themselves from under it; as may, and hath been done to the Son of Man. And who-soever are so stout as not to mind Scripture, God's revealed Law, are at this time Transgressors against the same, and shall be at the last day condemned by it. This would be alike sensible, if we had the same knowledge of him that is invisible, and consideration of Futurity, as we have now regard to our Kings and Governours after the Flesh, and take care for the present time; for (as before intimated) the Law of our God is written in a Book, and may in like manner be understood as the Laws, Customs and Manners of this or that Country we live in. Jer. 13. 13.

There are many Words in the World, and none of them is without Signification; for they have respect unto Things; and what expresses things as they are, the very Nature and Connexion of them together, That is Truth. Now because many of them are hidden, afar off, unseen, and not heard, it is the office of Reason to search them out, and to bring them near by Probability and Wickedness. So there may be many Words, and a long course of Reasoning to bring out one single Truth. And then opposite to Truth and Reason, are Falshood and Imagination. We may evidently perceive that all things are Gods, and that his Word is perfect and true, for that speaks of every thing according to its Nature (either in expresse Words or just Consequence, though this is many times hidden, and not discernable) which belong to mankind, from the greatest to the least, except what may be known from our selves, and the most common observation. So all is but vain and deceitful Words, which do not spring up, nor may be gathered from this ground of Truth. This is left as a standing Rule to try the Doctrines whether they be of men or no. And we may further know Truth by the Understanding which is given us: for Truth (if it be clearly apprehended) hath a full conviction over the Heart and Conscience. Notwithstanding the shifts and tricks, the disputing and crafty eluding, yet there doth remain a firm persuasion in the mind which cannot be got off. When the Spirit of the mind suggests to the man, *This is the very Truth*, it is exceeding dangerous to resist or to despise it; to be born against or despise it, to forget, or be wilfully ignorant. And

And hence we may learn to take a judgment and estimation of the *Wisdom of man's Words*, fine Flourishes, smooth Language or of needless unnecessary things, which may delight a little, but perish in the Reading: there is nothing in them, and it is all blown away as Chaff: But more especially are we to take heed of the *Leaven of the Pharisees* (which they mingle amongst, and thereby corrupt the Bread of Life) viz. their several kind of Glosses, Distinctions, and their own Inventions meet human Expositions and Traditions. Many ignorant People give more regard to the Opinions and Sayings of such a *Rabbi* or Teacher, than to what *Christ*, the *Prophets* and *Apostles* speak, or even what God himself speaketh by them. Indeed there was at first appointed a Peculiar, and distinct Office of Men to turn his People away from Iniquity, Mal. 2. 6. and to turn them to Righteousness, Dan. 12. 3. But instead thereof, *They strengthen the Hands of Evil-doers, that None doth return from his Wickedness*, Jer. 23. 14. And either conceal, or flatter them in Unrighteousness; and looth them up in the committing of those things, of which God hath said, *The Soul that sinneth, it shall die*, Ezek. 18. 4. They are rather Men-pleasers (and yet that is a bad way of pleasing men, to lead them blindly on to eternal Misery) than the *Servants of Christ*; for as he taxed the *Pharisees* of old time, so do these now reject the *Commandment of God*, that they may keep in favour with the chief Princes of this Nation. For Moses said, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*; and whosoever curseth Father or Mother, let him die the Death. But ye will excuse, and vindicate, and justify, if the Children shall not only take away the Right and Inheritance of the Father, but after they have taken Possession, they proceed to Kill and Murder: as carrying on unjust Wars, is intentional Murder all along. And that is that they may be profaned, though the outward pretence is for the *Protestant Religion* against *Papery*; Whereas if it were really so, yet if ye had a right knowledge of the Glory and Work of the Lord; The One is not to be advanced, nor the other carried on by sinful means. It is a wrong and contrary Method, to build up Zion with Blood, and Jerusalem with Iniquity, Micah 3. 10. But our Priests and Prophets do not exhort them to do Right and Equity to their Father, Making the Word of God of none effect through your own Expositions, which ye have delivered; and many such like things do.

God is my Witness, whom I serve in the Gospel of his Son, and as I hope for any Mercy at his Hand, I do here declare, That what I have already, and do now here, is also out of a greater Zeal and Emulation for the Truth and excellency of the pure Reformed Religion; which at this day yet under much Scandal and Reproach by

falsification

Mathe 7. 10.
11, 12, 13.

falsification of an Oath and manifest Unrighteousness. This Zeal of mine is according to Knowledge, and the certain direction of God's written Word, both of the Old and New Testament. For we are to use Oppression, nor exercise Robbery, nor oppress the Stranger, *Isaiah 58. 6.* Ezek. 22. 29. See the next Verse, *I will be a Swift Witness against the Strangers, and against those that Oppress the Fatherless, and that turn aside the Stranger from his Rights, Mal. 3. 5.* We ought to give no occasion that the Way of Truth be evil spoken of: We are to have our Conversation honest amongst the Gentiles, and to walk as the Children of God without rebuke. *Recompence to no man Evil for Evil: Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good, Rom. 12. 17. 21.* as such is the design of the Law and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles. If our Ways and our Doings are contrary, God sees it, and is displeased him that there was no judgment, *Isa. 49. 15.* And some one or more should appear forth publicly to testify against this National Sin and Corruption. What I have done herein, was to clear a great point, which is to manifest the *Most perfect Holiness and Uprightness of God*, who doth not allow to do Evil that Good may come. As God is Righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works; so according to his certain promise, *Judgment shall return unto Righteousness, and all the Upright in Heart shall follow it, Psalm 94. 15.*

So that it is not a matter of Indifference, what any one thinks, or speaks, or doth herein; but we are to side with the King Immortal, invisible and only Wise God against this Transitory World, the Folly, Falshood and Corruption which are seen therein. We ought to search and enquire diligently what is written, and to speak and do as We that shall be judged by the Law of God in Scripture. Not giving so much heed to them, whom the Word saith, and Experience confirmeth, *But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the Law; ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, saith the Lords of Hosts, Mal. 2. 8.* whose assertion may sooner be believed than their own Vindication. They may be more properly stiled followers of Mahomet, than of Moses or Christ, for these were faithful in all their House; But they, according to the Impostors Doctrine will call such a thing an especial Providence, and Immediate Deliverance sent by God, though the means (by which it came to pass) are against his express Word and written Revelation. But what, if some that handle the Law, know not God? shall this diminish from the Righteousness of God, or take away from the Purity and Uprightness of his Law? God forbid; yea, let God be true, and every man

a Lye, as it is written; That thou mightest be justified in thy Sayings, and overcome when thou art judged. We are sure that all Scripture came by Inspiration from God and therefore all is Truth what that saith. And whatever the Practices of others are to keep their places, or to make a gain of Gallinies, (so called, but rather Hypocrisie) or procure and retain the favour of the great Ones; yet such will be the greatest losers in the end; for there is a real Truth and Signification in these Words, *Blessed are they that keep Judgment; and He that doth Righteousness at all times.* Psal. 106. 3. And though at this present short time, *There is one event to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to him that sweareth, or he that sweareth an Oath;* Yet it will be certainly better with those who have continued whole and steadfast in the Covenant of their God, and have preserved a good Conscience in all things. So it will be seen and experienced, when of this, and every day of our Life, after years of discretion, we shall be called to Account; which will also extend to every Idle and false word that men do now speak. The time, place, circumstances and aggravations of such wilful Sins and deliberate Acts of Disobedience will be manifested, as they were day by day committed. And then it will be no excuse to have *justified the wicked for Reward, or for fashion, or because they had the greatest number of their side, or out of any wrong or incorrect Principle.* They act foolishly, and are ignorant, who flourish over and vindicate the *Violent perverting of Judgment and Justice in a Province;* for they may now Read and Understand, that the *Most High* regardeth the Matter, and there is *Higher* than they, who will set things at right again. That we which is now denounced against them who call Evil good, and Good evil, shall at length terminate in execution and misery.

It is a sad Thing to consider that any People for profit and advantage, for *pride and pleasure*, to get or keep the good will of their superior fellow Creatures, should whilst they live do those things, for which after Death they shall suffer punishment: And they should be more careful and fearful to humor and comply with a parcel of Dying Men, whose *Gifts perish with them*, and their Fury vanisheth into nothing, then they are to please an Almighty Father and Everliving God. Do ye think the Scripture saith in vain? *Trust in him as all sinners, ye People, pour out your Heart before him: God is a Refuge for us; Solid.* Surely Men of Low degree are *Vain*, and Men of High degree are a *Lye*: To be laid in the Balance they are altogether lighter than Vainry. *Trust not in Oppression, and become not vain in Robbery: If Riches increase, let not your Heart upon them: God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this,*

that Power belongs unto God. *Also unto thee, O Lord, belongs Mercy.* for thou wast first to every Man according to his Work, Psal. 62. 8, 9, 10, 11.

God hath wisely established things for a Life of Tryal, and an Obedience of Faith, and to exercise our Trust on him. He hath given us the *Law and the Testimony, and the Lights that is in them*, to discern and know Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong, Substance and Vanity. And the Salvation which we expect from our God, should always keep us in that stedfast purpose of mind, as not to commit any deliberate Sin, nor to continue in any known Transgression, nor to practise Hypocrisie, nor to leave Duty undone for to accomplish present things. If men did not talk of it as a Word of Course, but do really desire to get to Heaven (as now they see the outside, and they must certainly go off from this Earth) then they must not do those things that lead a contrary way, as that Word (which reveals the invisible things within, and the necessary means to obtain) doth expressly declare. It is no jesting matter, but rather a sad sign that the Curse of God, which is a fore-runner of his punishment, is fallen upon people when they *add Iniquity to their Iniquity, and yet come into thy Righteousness*, Psal. 69. 27. For the next thing which succeeds, is to be *blotted out of the Book of the living, and not be written with the Righteous*, Verſ. 28. and that is ten thousand times worse then to lose their Lives, Liberties and Estates.

And whereas it is further surmised, our pure Reformed Religion is more dear, and that would be endangered; It is here deliberately and advisedly affirmed, *That the Doctrines and Practices of these corrupt Times are more dangerous and prejudicial to Souls, than all the Errors and Superstitions of Popery*: for that same Word (which instructs in the way of Salvation, and makes known what is the pure and undefiled Religion before God) doth speak much more against Perjury, Lying, Unrighteousness, Disobedience to Parents, Revenge, false Accusation, Hypocrisie and an *Hypocritical Nation*, and such like, then it doth against Idolatry, Superstition, and false Worship. But the Will of God is, (which we must also do, if we would be saved) that we abstain from them all. Thou declarest upon Oath that the Pope cannot depose Heretical Princes, and that neither he, nor any Person whatsoever, hath Power to absolve thee of this Oath, or any part thereof; but what if God should judge that Protestant Lay-men cannot absolve Subjects from their Oath and Allegiance to a Popish King? In Truth, neither can one do it, nor yet the other. The same God, who commands that we keep from Idols, doth likewise enjoyn that we *do no wrong*, and that we *abstain from all appearance of evil*. It is both folly and Wickedness to run from one unlawful

unlawful extream to another; and God will shew and manifest that there is no necessity to proceed from evil to evil; and they know us not, saith the Lord, Jer. 9. 3.

It is impertinent and irksome to explain things so every particular-ly; but People are dull of apprehension: fears and jealousies are endless; and more especially a conscientiousness of guilt and wrong is not easily satisfied, for it hopes to have this excuse for their Sin, a surmise of Danger, and they venture upon these doubtful things to make more sure against it: for so they call such things which are as evidently a breach of the Law, as Adultery and Fornication are against the seventh Commandment, and are more certainly Sins, then Drunkenness is one, as themselves may know, for compare their Actions with the Law, and their own Thoughts will accuse them. When the Soul hath departed from the Law of the most High, she seeketh out for this or that Imagination to pacifie (but it cannot satisfie) the grumblings within at the present time; and which she vainly and falsely hopes will save harmless as to the future. But notwithstanding all the Deceivableness of Unrighteousness, strong Delusions, and human Allegations; Yet Gods Glory is not, nor can be advanced by sinful means. For, The just Lord is in the midst of us, he will not do Iniquity, Zeph. 3. 5. and we ought to suffer himself according to his own Gracious Promise to direct our Work (if we sincerely intend it for him, or otherwise will it is damnable Hypocrisie), in Truth, Isa. 61. 8. If we would indeed ride Prosperously, it must be because of Truth, and meekness and Righteousness. For whosoever doth the Work of the Lord, must do it only in the Good and right way, which himself doth direct all along, and chalk out in his Word. And this doth strictly forbid all manner of Sin and fallshood. They also do no Iniquity, they walk in his wayes, thy Word is very pure Psal. 119. 3. and vers. 140. Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth. John 17. 17. neither is the least evil to be done for the best end. Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Job. 13. 7. and to the same purpose is Rom. 3. 7. 8.

Here I have not so much to do with the clamours of the Multitude; but I ought to give an account to the Saints that are on the Earth, and the true Servants and Worshippers of God: who can better understand and iudge of these things. But ye know that every Scribe instructed in the Kingdom of God, if he would be faithful in all his House ought to speak out all that God is commanded and made known from the whole Scripture according to Deut. 8. 8. Psal. 18. 2. Jer. 26. 2. Dent. 27. 26. Mat. 23. 20, and so ye ought to receive and give attendance unto all Gods Word, and to diminish nothing, nor lose ought of it. And

then

then, If ye mark diligently what is here, and all along said, ye will find that I speak not these Things as a man, but both *Law and Gospel say the very same*. I speak nothing of my self, nor do I use meer Human Arguments, but *I make mention of Gods Righteousness, even of things only*, Psal. 71. 16. And therefore I do use (according to that dis- i. full term of Reproach) such a *sarrago* of Scriptures, hodge podge, as they are tagged together. If the same Imputation is endeavoured to be fastened on me, as was on those Jer. 20. 7. Mat. 27. 63. 2. Cor. 6. 8. My answer is the same; for I speak all along out of the Word of Truth, and make use of the *Armour of Righteousness on the right Hand, and on the left*.

Do not blame me, but let the Prophet *Ezekiel* arise forth and answer for himself, as one that would bring in Heathenism and destroy the true Worship of God; for what he saith so emphatical in his seventeenth Chapter, on behalf of the *King of Babylon*, according to humane apprehension, but in Truth he speaks for the *Oath and Covenant of God*. In vers. 15. the matter of fact is recited particularly (which may in like manner be applyed by one who knows the exact series of the affairs of our Time) and three Questions are asked in short, which imply a strong Negative, as it accordingly fell out; so that *they did not prosper, nor yet escape who did such things, nor were they delivered*. There was some mean time between the Prophets speaking this, and it being accomplished. Nay, do ye not accuse him neither, least your Murmuring is against the Spirit of God which spake by him: Who for further Illustration and Confirmation of this point doth in several other places speak expressly against a *false Oath*: And there was not to be any breach nor absolution from it, for outward conveniency or temporal advantage; as in case of the *Gibeonites*, *Jephthas Vow* and what may be gathered from *Judges* 21. 5, 7. concerning the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

And then further, let People take heed of provoking God to Anger, by *limiting the Holy One of Israel*, as if Deliverance was begun already, and must be accomplished by such an Instrument only; for herein they speak without the Book of the Lord: why, what saith that? *Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? And thou, O God, which didst not go out with our Armies? Give us help from Trouble, for vain is the help of man*, Psal. 60. 10, 11. And so likewise false and sinful is our fear; or if it were true and reasonable, yet *vain is the Opposition of Man*. For if things were done (as they indeed ought) only according to the Principles of Restitution and Justice, the exact rules of Righteousness and Wisdom, purely out of Obedience to God and the Word of his Grace, we should be all safe under the Divine Providence and Protection; so that we

Psal. 4. 3. may be bold to do Righteous things, and trust our God with the event of all. This is better and more safe than to venture upon evil and unlawful means, and so subject themselves to present confusion and future Punishment; for if such an one is restored to his civil Right, he may see the Work of the Lord, how Judgement is returned to Righteousness; and hereby he may be brought over to the pure and uncorrupt Religion; to which he may be the sooner won over by the honest dealing of the true and sincere Members thereof. But if his Heart be to do Mischief, Dan. 11. 27. and to practise Revenge and Cruelty, there is a God above, who according to his workings and methods of old may suffer his People for a while to be minished and brought low through Oppression, Affliction and Sorrow: He poureth contempt upon Princes, yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, Psal. 107. 39, 40, 41. It is said in the plural number, and he may so over-rule it by a clear ordaining Providence pursuant to his revealed Word, The Land shall be forsaken of both her Kings, Isa. 7. 16. And then also will this be found true, so that we our selves glory in you in the Churches of God, for your Patience and Faith in all your Persecutions and Tribulations that ye endure, which is a manifest token of the Righteous Judgements of God, that ye may be accounted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a Righteous thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you, 2. Thes. 1. 4, 5, 6. So that admitting it should be thus, Here is the Faith and Patience of the Saints, that they will rather choose affliction, than to commit Sin: and will not refrain from doing Righteous Things, though they did know and were assured it would bring suffering on them; for such indeed, and none else will be accounted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which they suffer. But if Men will trust to the methods of their own Wisdom, till they are run out, and themselves are confounded and basted: And will either before or afterwards use some unlawful Means to preserve themselves from, or get out of Persecution, God will proceed to do a marvellous Work amongst this People, even a marvellous Work and a Wonder, that the Wisdom of these wise Men shall Perish, and they shall justly suffer as Evil-doers. Then they will wish they had done otherwise when it is too late; for such Repentance is the same with that of Judas or Esau, and the damned in Hell; who when they come to be fully sensible of what they have lost, and are to suffer, then only they would have done otherwise, when before they were proved the same thing, but did it not.

It would be looked upon as vain Arrogancy and Proud Boasting, if I should repeat at length and apply what is written and asserted thrice, *Psal. 119. 98, 99, 100.* Yet it is thankfulness to God the giver to speak out

out and acknowledge the same, and also it is a benefit and instructi- ^{Weeks 9. 15.}
 on to others to assign the very reason how such an one came to that ^{16.}
 Wisdom and Understanding. And likewise great heed is to be taken
 all along that this is confined within the bounds of God's Law. I am
 doubtful whether I shall not Transgress my Commission to insert one
 Human saying, *Inter deliria senum et prejudicia juvenum cadit Republica*, ^{1 Kings 12. 8.}
 but sometimes we are allowed to speak the words of Man's Wisdom
 and common observation. And notwithstanding the contempt, pre-
 judice and disdain, which may arise against me because of my *Taunt*, ^{1 Sam. 17.}
1. Tim. 4. 12. and seeming forwardness, I will add this yet further, and ^{23. 29.}

do here take Liberty to make a publick and solemn Protestation, that
 according to the Grace & Knowledge God shall be pleased to continue
 and further endue me withal, *I will as soon stand in the gap to prevent*
the coming in and overflowing of Popery, with my Life, Liberty, and younger
Brothers Portion; as now I expose them all against falsehood and unrighteous-
ness. If at any time (either now or hereafter) I should recede and draw
 back from this deliberate Resolution of mine here made, then let me
 be made an object of the utmost fury of the Multitude. I would under-
 go all *Ravillies* Torments and quietly submit to the most cruel and
 lingering death that ever yet man endured since the World began. This
 is here published and recorded to stand against and be executed upon
 me, and that it may be done with me according to mine own words.

I am as it were necessitated to use this confidence of Boasting; for
 it hath been surmised against me as if I plead for Baal and his false Wor-
 shippers, that I have displayed a banner for Antichrist in this Kingdom,
 and that I am a Minister of Satan transformed into a Minister of Right-
 eousness; which last is more supposed of me, because I do *discover In-*
quiry to turn away our Captivity, Lam. 2. 14. and that other threatening
 manifested under the Gospel. And also in order to *turn away Inquiry*
from Jacob, it is necessary to lay open the full aggravation and *sinfulness*
of Sin, and also to cite the Scriptures; but for doing these things I am
 thought to be like him that *accuses our Brethren before God day and night*, ^{Rom. 11. 2.}
 But then this charge must also fall upon *Elia* and the *Prophets*, *Christ*
 and the *Apostles*, and all faithful Teachers down ever since, and at
 this day; for they according to their Duty and Office did the very same.
 We cannot inform God of any thing, nor make the Sins of Men known
 unto him, nor recorded before him, for he knows much more himself.
The Sin of Judah is written with a Pen of Iron, and Graven with a point of
a Diamond, though no mortal Man did in the least Speak or Write
 thereof. But our God commands that they be shewed and told there-
 of, in order to which it is necessary to do both. We have no way to
 convince

convince of Sin and turn unto Righteousness, but by the Scriptures; And when the Devil quotes them, as we read that once he did, he leaves out the material Words, *To keep thee in all thy Ways*, which is in *Psalm* 91. 11. but quite omitted *Mat.* 4. 6. and in *Luke* 4. 10. *to keep thee* is added, but the last Words are again omitted. So that the Allegation is the more subtle and fallacious. But our Lord did confront Scripture to Scripture; and let this be shewed and done by my Adversaries, and not think it sufficient barely to object the same against me. Let the Learned, but Unstable of our days, shew where the Scriptures have been any where wrested; for there have been cited those places which are easie to be understood, according to the plain and common signification. But when there is a Comment added to hinder from coming into the way of Righteousness, then this Imputation will truly fall back upon themselves; as God will judge and determine at last; tho' now they justify themselves before Men, and have the fashion and multitude on their side. If Satan doth once cite Scripture, not in general, or by halves, but particularly and fully to turn People from Iniquity unto Righteousness, then *he doth rise up against himself, and is divided: He cannot stand and hath an end.* And if my self have done that under all (as I can think of) the principal heads of Good and Evil, as may be seen in the *Book of Happiness*, &c. to which I have prefixed my Name; then it may be judged whether I am a true Minister of Righteousness; tho' by the Impositions and Restraints of Men, I am as yet debarred from the publick and outward Administration of that Office by reason of contradictory Oaths, and to me doubtful Subscriptions. And if my self have wrote against Popery more than my Equals, as may be seen in the above-cited Book, page 75, 120, 121, 160, 190, 212, 243, 253, 411, 460, 461, 462, 487, 586, 618, 691, 700. And yet am a Papist, then also Popery is divided against it self, and that hath an end, and cannot stand. I shall never be able to do any thing to advance the Cause, but subject my self to present shame & eternal confusion. If I do once speak or act contradictory to mine own printed words in the least considerable instance, then I am a Liar, Deceiver, false Prophet, Traytour, heady and high-minded; and then I may be justly and safely proceeded against as such.

That Book was indeed compiled in the late King's Reign, but came out of the Press after his departure. And there is one single page therein, viz. the hundred sixty second; which if he had been put in mind of, and thoroughly observed, the Truth contained therein would have preserved him in his Throne to this day, and the enemies of our reformed Church had got no advantage over us. And also that Sin, Disturbance, Confusion, the bloody & doubtful events of War might have been prevented, which we have been since involved in.

If I have spoken the Truth, it ought to be believed and received; If I am all along consistent and agreeable to my self (which others may examine as strictly as they will) then it is *Truth*. And if my only drift and design is to teach transgressors thy wayes, and that Sinners may be converted unto God, then *the Truth of God is come unto you*. Though according to the Divine Method it may spring up from an obscure press, and compiler, and remain for some time hidden and concealed from the World, for People are ashamed of *such Words in an adulterous and fustil Generation*; and they hate the Light, neither come they to the Light lest their deeds should be reprov'd. *The Light shineth in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehends it not*, John 1. 5. It doth not see and perceive, and also it is afraid and shrinks thereat. And also there is the whole Truth spoken out without fear and respect of Persons, and without favour of and siding with any Sect or party; and also the time is come when they will not endure sound Doctrine, for these and such like Reasons only, it hath been universally rejected, and not received.

I have all my Life time kept constant Communion with the Church of England, and have daily frequented its publike Worship as I have opportunity, and do at least thrice in the Year receive the Holy Sacrament, according to the appointed Institution. I have been also some few times, since the Established Liberty of the Congregations of Protestant Dissenters; and herein I do act pursuant to that Truth Manifested in the fifth Chapter of my afore-cited Book under the head of *different communions*. But I did never in the least joy with the Popish way of Worship, nor did ever so much as see it, which I have had the curiosity only to incline me so far; but I thought even that to be a sin and unlawful, because of their Superstition and Image Worship; and therefore I did utterly refrain. I do desire and would endeavour after a Greater degree of purity and reformation even in our established Church; for it should be yet more freed from the Ordinances and Commandments of men. Though I do withal consider that the *Restorer of Paths to dwell in*, Isa. 58. 12. is only to take away that rubbish and corruption (which hath so long laid in them) that they may be smooth, right and plain as they were at first, and they are to remain the very same, for we are to come up again to the *old Paths, where is the good way*, Jer. 6. 16. The Wall is in no wise to be removed, nor yet the Foundations altered, but the *old waste places are to be builded*, and they are to be raised up, and the *breach is to be repaired*; and all is to be done in the very same place.

We would not willingly bring a Scandal, or Odium, or Dishonour them in the sight of their several Congregations; but yet the *Sons of Levi are to be purified*; that they may offer unto the Lord an Offering in Righteousness; and that they might be the same as in the dayes of Old, and in former Years; when they did Teach Jacob thy Judgments, and Israel thy Law; and the Lord did accept the work of their Hands. When they did walk before him in Peace and Equity, and did turn many away from Iniquity. And now the fault is only in themselves, for why should they do those things as to be *contemtable and base before the People*?

As their office is to admonish the People of their Sin and Errour : so God in his abundant Care and Provision for his Church, hath all along instructed and raised up others (who were not of the *Levitical Priesthood*) to do the like unto them also.

It seems to be Ignorance or Interest that People are so over zealous for, and confined within a particular Church, or such a Congregation ; whereas we should acknowledge and answer to no other Name than that of a *Christian* ; not according to the common notions thereof, but as it is written in the Word of God, by living according to all the Rules and directions there. And then we might all agree to the same manner, and meet at the same place of Worship.

A summary of the preceding Discourse.

Both the secret Thought and open accusation of the World are affixed on Me for Publishing such Words unto them, *This man seeketh not the welfare of this People but the hurt.* Jer. 38. 4. He that conquers Kingdoms and enlarges Territories, is reputed a Great Instrument of Mens Happiness; though it is accomplished with the Price of Blood, and by unlawful means, and the utmost thereof is a shadow only of Good, which just passeth by and is gone for ever. But they are the only unacceptable Persons to the World; who instruct People how they must live and do, *that they may be saved*; and lead them into the right way, that they may live as Peaceably and comfortably here, as can be well desired in this World ; and at last be Happy and Blessed throughout all eternity. Men need not be in the least scrupulous and fearful as to this present time; for these Words, if understood aright, would prevent that further effusion of Blood in our neighbour Nations. And one Mans Life, if he knew how rightly to esteem it, is more valuable to himself than two Kings and their Kingdoms. They, according as it was long since foretold of them, *1 Sam. 8.* do turn their Subjects into Servants, and make use of the lower sort of People for their Wars ; but they have not so learned of Christ ; for of him it is written, *He shall spare the Poor and needy, and shall save the Souls of the needy. He shall redeem their Soul from Deceit and Violence, and precious shall their Blood be in his sight.* Psal. 72. 13, 14. The same eternal Word and Truth would put a stop to the further impoverishment which is likely to fall on our own Nation through continued taxes and charge ; which would somewhat take off from the Oppression of the Poor and the fighting of the Needy ; for that is drained out which should carry on Trade and Commerce. The Spirit of God doth take notice of such things, as may be seen, *Isa. 23.* 18. And then the Seas might be set open again, that People may follow their lawful Merchandize with less fear and Danger. And then again, the like Way and Method may be found out *to restore unto all Nations Unity, Peace and Concord*, which we pray for as a Blessing, so we should likewise endeavour after out of a mind to the publick good, *That there be no breaking in nor going out : That there be no complaining in our Streets,* Psal. 144. 14. Which

Which would be in Dead and in Truth accomplished; If, as they do already own and profess him, to the Kings and Princes, and Lords and Counsellors, and Pastors and Teachers of all sorts, *would obey the Lord our God, and do according to all his Laws and Statutes.* If they do not, their Sin will find them out severally, and as they are joined together in a community; for the time draws near, when He will fulfil his Word, for the *Nation and Kingdom that will not serve thee shall Perish: Yea, those Nations shall be utterly wasted.* Isa. 60. 12.

The Lord visiteth Righteousness and Judgment for all that are oppressed, Psal. 103. 6. How is this true? For many are oppressed throughout their Life, and dye so. But it is to be understood from the words following, *He made known his ways unto Moses,* Vers. 7. He hath commanded and shewed in his Word how it should be done. And if People will not do it freely and willingly, we his Servants have no more to say, but we leave it to God himself to perform, fulfil and execute his Word. They may believe and tremble that the same Almighty God, who spake the World into Being, and commanded his Word to a thousand Generations, will also give forth the executive Sentence. *And I will punish the World for their evil, and the Wicked for their Iniquity: and I will cause the Arrogancy of the Proud to cease, and will lay low the Haughtiness of the Terrible,* Isa. 13. 11. which last hath been already fulfilled in foregoing Generations, and there is a fearful expectation of the other. The like doth haste to be accomplished and determined upon the present Generation, unless they agree with their Adversary quickly whilst they are now in the way. Consider of it seriously; *Had ye rather die in your Sins, and utterly Perish in your own corruption, then be told thereof and be put in a way how you may escape?* Now it is high time to look about your selves, for now ye are nearer to Death and Immortality then ever ye wert yet: and so ye approach nearer from Day to Day, till one drop away after another into the future state. And then do appear forth the things contained in Scripture (out of which I have spoken all along) and are manifested to our separated Spirits, all one as the Things we now here in the Flesh do see handle and converse withal. God will take care that what he hath said, shall come to pass. And those who are now so stout and disdainful to value his Words as an empty sound, or a dead impertinent letter which may be laid aside, and not minded, & suppose there is not much more in it then waste Paper with some impressions of Ink: Or if it is quiet and powerful, and sharper then any two edged Sword; then out of the Spirit of opposition and revenge they may do as *Jehoids* did, Jer. 36. 23. *Cut it with a Pen-Knife or cast it into the Fire, or some other way embezzil and lose it:* such People may at length find and be sensible of an hideous lamentation in themselves, and that it is become a *Savour of Death unto Death:* As the words in a statute Book do now cause several to suffer loss of Liberty, Life or Member, and other ways of punishment: and that aforementioned is as silly a device, as for a guilty offender to tear the Record or Statute by which he is to be judged,

for this doth only argue a greater contempt and provocation to God, who did send forth his Word to bring them to Repentance, that he might forgive Jer. 36. 3. and Pardon them. And it remains still the same in the purpose and determination and Book of the Lord: *From Scripture, all that is truly inferred, will be in like manner fulfilled.* Let there go about never so many like *Elymas* the Sorcerer to defeat what is here said; or as *Jannes and Jambres* of old time: So do too many now *resist the Truth*. 1 Tim. 3. 8. or disregard it, till that remains: And however in the mean while it is fled or perverted; nevertheless it will rise up at the Judgment of the great Day. Whether they will hear or forbear, whether they will read or not, these Words are laid before them, that they might have turned from Iniquity unto Righteousness: And not in Hypocrisy or outward shew; but in sincerity and Truth see their God daily, and delight to know his Ways.

The Compilers Defence for himself.

And now methinks I hear the whispering and secret Counsel of those, which may arise yet higher, and it shall be done in a solemn Judiciary proceeding, *Aray with this turbulent Fellow, it is not fit he should live; for he doth exceedingly disquiet this Nation; we will send him away before to prove whether the words he hath here said together, be true; or else do it according to the subtilty of the old Serpent in the la King Places of the Villages, and Murder the Innocent in secret Places, or by administering some deadly thing; for this will not make much noise, and we shall be thus happily rid of one, who doth and will continue to Torment the Inhabitants of the Earth; and therefore one way or another, let him be Slain.*

Ye may indeed Kill my Body, but ye cannot Kill me; for there is an Immortality, Resurrection of the Dead and eternal Judgment. If that should be (which God forbid, and yet it may be supposed, for the like hath been fulfilled in our Brethren, who were Slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held. Rev. 6. 9.) yet I shall see again, and meet with my Murderers. But the safer way is to forewarn you all of these things. *Hear my Voice, O God, in my Prayer; Preserve my Life from fear of the Enemy; hide me from the secret counsel of the Wicked and from the Insurrection of the Workers of Iniquity. fear was on every side, while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my Life.* But yet with all their secret violence and consultations, they cannot do it in that place and after that manner, where God may not see it and know it. And the Lord will find it out when he maketh Inquisition for Blood, this and that man was put to Death after such a manner, by the Hands of such Persons, and for such a cause. God sends me as a Messenger to his Subjects, to acquaint them of their Violation of his Laws, and to testify against them, to turn them to God and Righteousness: And I put them in mind to live under his Government and

to obey his Laws for the future : But for doing of this they seek to Kill me. Help me; O Lord my God: O save me according to thy Mercy; that they may know that this is thy Hand: That thou Lord hast done it.

If they should send me before, there is no calling of me back again, and so no Restitution; nor yet will the *Crocodile's* Tears afterwards wash away the guilt of my Blood: The building the Tombs of the Prophets, and garnishing the Sepulchres of the Righteous will not make an atonement for the Sin of killing them. And moreover, it will be but a very small advantage and short respite; for your Spirits also in a little time will fly out one after another. And if they are so impatient now, that they cannot endure a single Troubler of Israel, how then will ye endure to meet with the whole Company of Prophets and Apostles, who were the very same to their Age and Country; what I am accused of now? How will your selves look Christ in the Face (the great Preacher of Righteousness) if ye should offend one of those little Ones that belongs to him? And proceed in the same manner as those did, who Slew him and hanged him on a Tree: How will ye answer it before God the Judge of all? And excuse your selves to the Spirits of Just Men made perfect? Who then will he without partiality and respect of Persons: Who will not in the least favour of what belongs unto Men, and also have a right knowledge of both sides; the want whereof doth hinder the Saints on Earth from giving a righteous judgment. But yet further, your own self-conviction, which is now stifled, shall break forth; And your own thoughts which now a little accuse you, shall appear fully out, and get the Dominion (as before did the Thoughts of Iniquity) and shall recoil upon your selves.

This know, and be assured of in the mean while, that the Persecuting Spirit is the Work of the Dragon, who hath so long made War with them which keep the Commandments of God, Rev. 12. 17. and Persecution or Prosecution of his Servants (even as its first beginning, to the last wicked act) doth arise and continue from want of the true knowledge of God; as is evident from these following places of his Word. For Strangers are risen up against me, and Oppressors seek after my Soul; They have not set God before them, Psal. 54. 3. O God, the Proud are risen against me, and the Assemblies of Violent Men have sought after my Soul, and have not set thee before them, Psal. 86. 14. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain. Why so? For the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea, Isa. 11. 9. They shall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the Time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service: And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me, Joh. 16. 2, 3. Which none of the Princes of this World knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory, 1 Cor. 2. 8. He prayed for his Murderers, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do, Luk. 23. 34. But now men have no such excuse for their Sin; neither will God hear, nor are we allowed to pray hilt according to Truth. Paul gives the Reason why he who was a Persecutor ob-

ained Mercy, Because I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief, 1 Tim. 1. 13. which implies the contrary, if it had been knowingly done. And here again, to be willingly ignorant, and to make haste to shed Innocent Blood, Isa. 59. 7. because they hope to have this excuse for their Sin; This is to seek sleep to hide their Counsel from the Lord, Isa. 29. 15. Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the Heart, Psal. 44. 21. Or whatever pretence or vindication they may have before the world, can they conceal from his Eyes, before whom all things are naked and opened with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 13. and are to be judged by him only. For it is a small thing, or nothing to be accountable one to another. But it is a further degree of Sin and Iniquity, & will bring on greater Guilt and Condemnation, when People are not only contented not to obey the Laws and Truth of the Most high God, but also as their Fathers did to the Prophets, Persecute and Kill such who are appointed to make it known: And all those who are even now for filling up the measure of their Fathers: Have they not so much knowledge and reason to reflect for their own safety? Do ye not think, it would have been better for them if they had not contemned God's Prophets, and done his appointed no harm.

My Authority and Commission for doing these things, is (as aforesaid) from the 23d Chapter of Matthew, and Vers. 34. And also what I can make evident from the 14th Chapter of John, and 17th Verse, Even the Spirit of Truth; which by some is hard to be rightly apprehended, for the same Reason as the World cannot receive him, because it seeth him not. But yet they may conceive thus much, What is that common sense and reason which is within themselves? May it be felt or seen? And is it not only to be Understood? That Discourse and inferring of one thing from another, is in order to bring out something that is Truth. The pure acts of the mind may give a Light and glimmering to natural and reasonable Souls, that there are higher and Spiritual things, which shall shortly be revealed before us with open Face, as these low and Earthly things are, among which we now dwell; I speak unto wise Men, Judge ye of what I say. The Truth which I speak, that is my Commission. And though it is not seen, yet it may be sensibly felt and evidently perceived within your own Consciences. I will put my Words in his Mouth. Dent. 18. 18. Behold I have put my Words in thy Mouth, Jer. 1. 9. and such Words only are a good and sufficient Commission of themselves.

God hath been pleased to try many of his Servants even unto the Death, to see what they will endure for him: and to let the wickedness of Men go on, that he may behold what they will do against him. For my part I know not what or when is determined with me; but I trust on that God who gave me and all mankind Life and Breath. Though my Faith may a little doubt, it will not altogether fail, if I should be conformed to the Example of Christ or Isaiah, to whom that particular Phrase was, Behold my Servant whom I uphold
Isa.

Isa. 42. 1. Yet both of them fall by the Hands of wicked Men, & I have had the application of some Promises, which encouraged me to this great Work; but yet if I should be cut off in the midst of my dayes, I do believe and am assured (for I utterly renounce the persons of Men) that seeing the thing is Government and Peace which must be laid on an Holy, Righteous, True and lasting Foundation to bring in Christs Kingdom) and it is to Order it and to Establish it with Judgement, and with Justice, from henceforth even forever. The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this, Isa. 9. 7. Now God doth send that into the Hearts of his Servants: And it is an active Principle which will still reach forth where it can apprehend any thing more, until it be firmly and thoroughly Established. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged till he have set Judgment in the Earth. Isa. 42. 4. That is the thing we go upon only. And here if one simple weak and unworthy Instrument should be stopt and hindred, or shut up and killed; I nothing question, but as the Lord spake thus to me with a strong Hand, and distressed me that I should not walk in the way of this People; so likewise he will stir up the Hearts of more; for one may be an hundred, and to ten may succeed a thousand, who will in like manner fully accomplish what is here imperfectly begun, for I do only speak out the thoughts of thousands, and what the Conscience of all (even mine Enemies being Judges) doth assent unto. And though others by reason of Unbelief and Distrust, fear and the distates of fleshly wisdom are, Isa. 36. 18. *quiet and still*; so that as in the dayes of Elias, I do appear alone, Rom. 11. 3. and they account me a Fool or a Mad man, because I know whom I have believed; I can stay on my God as to the present, and discern his Promises as to the future. I will go in the Strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy Righteousness, even of thine only, Psal. 71. 16. And I do here affirm, that if I were not hindred by the Devil and his visible Instruments, who have already twice cast me into Prison that I might be cryed, Rev. 2. 10. God knows only what may be done yet further as to mine own Person; but I trust, as he sits above, and is the Almighty God, King of all Kings, and Governour of all things, whose Power no Creature is able to resist; So he will over-rule all and manifest that he is stronger and will prevail. And then if his Word hath free Utterance and Passage, it will do yet more then Armies and Fleets, national Laws and meer humane constitutions: For it will Rebuke the Company of Spear-men, and scatter the People that delight in War, and break their cords and snap their bands asunder: And the same Spirit may be again revived, who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the Mouths of Lyons, Heb. 11. 33. It is observable how the Holy Ghost expresseth it here, and also Psal. 135. 2. Isa. 32. 17. *After* 10. 34. by the phrase of working Righteousness, for that implies Labour, difficulty and succession of time. It must be worked out, and way made, as we use to say in common speaking.

And though the Enemy, who lets, may here again surmise, that this is a troublesome

troublesome spirit, which must be taken off in the beginning and utterly extinguished before it spends too far; for at this rate we shall never have any Peace, or Quiet: Yet let them know, that here the *Abaddon* do rage, and the People imagine a vain thing, as quite to suppress it, and they think falsely that it will put things out of order. Be still and know that there is a God above, who will continue to send out his Light and his Truth, till it over-spreads and prevails over the Face of the whole Earth. And whoever in the mean while shall endeavour to quench and stifle it, this is direct *walking contrary*, *Lev. 26. 21* and *striving with their Maker*. And it shall be at length upon them *as a consuming Fire to devour its Adversaries*, and they shall find it a hard to kick against the Pricks. The more they oppose Truth, it will strike deeper, and wound, and lay them in a greater condemnation. All the World must be subject unto God: If People do not provoke him to Anger, he will do you no hurt, *Jer. 29. 6*. He is not a terror to single Persons, Families or Nations, unless they do that which is evil, and transgress his Law; and then by further Recklessness and Provocation, they draw a much greater severity of his threatnings and punishment on themselves. Wilt thou not be afraid of the Government of God over the World, as he doth exercise the same by the *still Voice* of his Word and Spirit? Do that which is good & Righteous, then thou shalt have the approbation of our God at the present time, to which succeeds an eternal reward. All People (High and Low, Rich and Poor, or whoever they be) had better be Obedient and Submissive under this Almighty Power, who intereth King for ever, *Psal. 29. 10*. For they might live as contentedly under him as Subjects under the most Lawful & Excellent Prince; Children under the most loving, just & wise Father; & Servants under the best of Masters. Whereas if people be never so impatient and toils to & fro, it is to no purpose, but to gaul themselves yet more. *Only have a good mind towards God; and shew your selves accordingly to his Embassadors, who come with the Word of his Truth; for no other intent and purpose, but that there might be Glory to God in the highest, an Earth Peace, Good, will towards men, Luk. 2. 14*. Then Judgment shall dwell in the Wilderness, and Righteousness remain in the fruitful Field. And the work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the effect of Righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my People shall dwell in peaceable habitations, and in sure Dwellings, and in quiet resting Places, *Isa. 32. 16, 17, 18*.

POSTSCRIPT.

LET no Man (either in the Transcribing or Reprinting) add unto, nor diminish, nor alter any thing in this Testimony of Truth, without my Knowledge or Assent.

R. S.

FINIS.